

A  
VINDICATION  
OF THE  
Moral Philosopher;

AGAINST THE  
False ACCUSATIONS,

INSULTS, and Personal ABUSES,

OF

SAMUEL CHANDLER,

Late *Bookseller*, and MINISTER OF THE  
GOSPEL.

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By THOMAS MORGAN, M.D. *K*

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L O N D O N:

Printed for T. Cox, at the *Lamb* under the  
*Royal-Exchange*. 1741.

[Price One Shilling.]

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# VINDICATION

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**T**HE Rev. Mr *Samuel Chandler*, after a three or four Years profound Silence as to the Argument of the *Moral Philosopher*, has at last drawn his Pen not against the Book but the Author. I having called upon him for some Proof of several Things which he had falsly charged me with in a publick Place and Company, and he not being able or willing to answer the Demand, was highly incensed at it, and vowed Revenge. He pretended at first not to know or aim at me as the Author of the Book, or at least, that he did not mention my Name in what he had said of the

Book and Author, at the Time and Place I referred to. But this I could have proved to be false, had he given me an Opportunity; and to put him out of all Doubt about the Author, if he could have had any before, which yet is scarce credible, I gave it him upon his Demand under my Hand. A particular Detail of this more private Quarrel between him and me could be of no Use to the Publick, and therefore I shall not waste Time or Paper with it. The Letters which passed on this Occasion are still at my Bookseller's Shop, Mr Cox's, under the *Royal-Exchange*, where many Gentlemen have seen them, or any one else may. But this has put Resolution into his Heart, and Arms into his Hands, to make a publick Example of me, to the utter Shame and Confusion of all those who, in Time to come, might dare to provoke his Rage, or question his priestly Authority, and Right of defaming; many Worthies have done Wonders, but this Don *Furioso de Torredo* excels them all. He lays all dead before him, and carries every thing Sword in Hand. His very Menaces are dreadful, and the Thunder of his Voice, if possible, more astonishing than the Strength of his Arm: this Champion bids Defiance at every Blow, but is almost sure to miss his Aim. His Threats are tremendous, but his Power contemptible.

While our Confessor and Inquisitor is hunting for Scandal, foaming with black Choler, sweating



sweating and toiling for personal Invektive; to rake up and fling Dirt, and doing the Work of a spiritual Scavenger, he has silently given up every Point in Argument that I had been contending for. He thinks Divines in general have gone too far with their Matters of Revelation, and therefore it seems he was resolved not to take one Step in this Way, nor to leave himself accountable for any one Proposition relating to it. He has quite lost the Thing, and cares not what it is, or whether it be any Thing or no. But he must still keep to and sound out the Name to raise a Dust, and enrage the blinded Populace with the Cry of Thief, Highwayman, mad Dog, &c. a very honourable and justifiable Method no doubt.

I should have been glad to have try'd Mr. *Chandler's* utmost Strength and Skill upon the Question of Revelation above Reason, or a *supernatural reveal'd Religion*, as really distinct from the *Religion of Nature*. Could he have proved against me the Infallibility, or unerring Guidance, of the *Hebrew* Historians, the certain Evidence of Miracles or Prophecies, as a Proof of positive Authority, and of Doctrines founded upon it, antecedent to, or abstracted from, the eternal immutable Reason and Fitness of Things, as appearing to the natural human Understanding; could he have supported the Moral Character of his *Hebrew* Historian, or of their great Heroes  
and

and Worthies, the Fathers and Founders of their Nation, upon the Foot of positive Authority, or Divine Commission as they put it, or shewn, that what they justify all along upon this Principle, is justifiable in the Nature and Reason of Things, or that they do not, or at least very seldom, approve of or justify any Thing upon the supposed positive Authority and Command of God, but what is at least consistent with Nature, Truth, and Reason: I say, had he done any Thing of this, or so much as attempted it, he might have passed for a fair Adversary, and an honest Man, who had writ at least according to the best of his Understanding and Abilities, in Defence of Christianity and Reveal'd Religion. But as he has not so much as attempted any Thing of this, it must be evident to the whole World, that he had no Concern at all about it, and that he was resolved to dispute nothing with me but my Honesty. To have proved me mistaken, or that I had not been sufficiently careful with regard to some incidental historical Facts, upon which no Stress had been laid; this, I say, could not have answered his End, or at all served his Purpose, unless he could have proved me a Rogue and Villain, a wilful Forger and Misrepresenter of Facts, and a Man of no Truth, Honour, or Conscience, and who ought not therefore to be regarded in any Thing either of Reason or Facts. This is the short Way of such priestly Divine Politicians,

ticians, and religious Bites, to answer every Thing that they cannot answer. And thus Imposture subsists upon Enthusiasm, and designing Priests gain their Ends by the honest undesigning People, whom they have made their blind believing Tools and Dupes.

I think it is a very hard Case to be forced to write a Book only to take off an Imputation, which the Adversary could not possibly prove, and where every Man of Impartiality, good Sense, and Honour, must see through the Malice and base Design of the Accuser. But though Mr *Chandler* has made himself my grand Accuser, I can assure him, that he has not at all tormented me. He is, indeed, my *ghostly Confessor*, but I thank God he is not my *Judge*. I shall take but little Notice in what follows of his priestly Complements and Civilities, for all which I might thank him, as an Adversary, though perhaps his Friends may not thank him for any Service he has done the Cause by it, or importune him much to go on in the same godly Way of Defamation and Scandal. For all which I can not only forgive him, but if he can forgive himself upon mature Deliberation, I should pity him. For, poor Gentleman, I consider his Infirmary, and the Necessity he was under. The black morbid Vapour had risen upon him, and swelled his Spleen to such a Degree, that had he not given some

vent



vent to it, he might have burst or been suffocated.

§. 1. My Confessor spends a long Preface of two Sheets, to let the Reader know, that I am now gone off from some of my old avowed Principles, and that I have not now the same Notions and Sentiments, in all Matters of Religion, which I had four or five and twenty Years ago. And this, doubtless, is a Discovery worthy of such a Searcher into Nature and Reason. But I have always openly and honestly declared my real Sentiments in every Thing which I thought of Consequence to others, though I never promised to be always of the same Mind, or never farther to regard Truth, or rectify any Error which I might see, and be convinced of. And if Mr *Ghandler's* Virtue and Integrity consists in this, I should never envy him the Honour of coming as wise out of the Schools, under all the Prejudices of Education, as ever he designed to be.

His whole Preface is a mad enthusiastic Rant, in charging it as highly criminal, infamous, and morally wicked, for a Man ever to change his Opinions in Religion, or to declare at one Time his Belief of Doctrines, as founded in Scripture and Reason, which afterwards, upon farther and stricter Enquiry, he finds not to be true. But if this be such a Crime in a Physician, I suppose it would not be so in a Bookseller. I think there cannot  
be



be a plainer Proof of a Man's Honesty and Integrity, than openly to own and avow his former Mistakes and Errors when he is convinced of them, especially when he can expect no temporal Advantage from it, but must necessarily be a Loser, and sacrifice his *Interest* to *Truth*. But I dare be accountable for Mr *Chandler*, that he will never be guilty of any such *Immorality*. I was once in the common Scheme of Redemption by a prior Covenant, Satisfaction, and Justification, by the Merits of another. I had taken up with these Things upon Trust, as then thinking them to be scriptural and rational. I was too much an implicit Believer, as, I believe, most Men are in their first Education. But when I came to see, upon reading the Scriptures, attending to the Reason of Things, and judging for my self, that these Doctrines must be false in themselves, and hurtful in their Consequences, my concern for Truth and Virtue would not suffer me to conceal such a Conviction. And this is all the monstrous moral Wickedness which my spiritual Accuser, and priestly Confessor, charges me with. I might very well say, that I could never see these Things in Scripture, nor is it possible I should while I took it all upon trust, and had never, with any Care or Impartiality, searched for them there. But I wish my Accuser had but Honour and Honesty enough to let the World know in particular, what he now believes of

these Matters more than I. He may talk very safely and gainfully in general about supernatural Revelation, while he dares not fix it to any Point, or make himself accountable for any Thing of it. And I must leave the World about us to judge of the Honour and Honesty of such a Conduct.

He concludes his remarkable Preface with an Observation which shews his Judgment, Candour, Justice, and good Sense; and lets the Reader see how little he was aware, in this Run of Hypochondriacism, that he had been saying the best Things in the World of me.

At the Close of his Preface he quotes a Passage of mine, which he thought would pin me down for ever as a prevaricating inconsistent Impostor, whom no Body ought to credit or regard in any Thing. I had observed it as a *necessary Rule, or Principle of human Prudence, which every Man ought to lay down to himself, and act upon; not to regard or be determined, by any Set of Professors or Teachers, in any Thing concerning which they cannot agree among themselves.* And from hence I concluded, that since the most learned Christian Divines, for so many Ages, have been infinitely and irreconcilably divided about supernatural Revelation, and Divine Faith, and could never fix the Point, or come to any Agreement, it must plainly follow, that no Credit or Regard can be due to them in such Matters.

Matters. But my Reverend Accuser, instead of denying this Consequence, or taking any Notice of it at all, and without fixing his own Point of Revelation, or letting us know in what Sense, or how far, he would defend it, goes on thus raving and railing.

“ If this be so necessary a Rule of human  
“ Prudence, as the learned Doctor has here  
“ magisterially determined, it must be an  
“ equal, yea a much more necessary, Rule of  
“ human Prudence, never to regard, nor in  
“ any Thing to be determined by any parti-  
“ cular Teacher or Professor, when he can-  
“ not agree with himself. And therefore, as  
“ our Doctor, in his double Capacity of *Priest*  
“ and *Philosopher*, differs from himself, and  
“ broaches the most essentially opposite and  
“ contradictory Principles, he hath fairly dis-  
“ charged all the prudent Part of Mankind  
“ from paying him any Regard in any Cha-  
“ racter, and has condemned himself, by the  
“ *Oracular Judgment* of his own Mouth, to  
“ be regarded by none but those who are de-  
“ stitute of all Prudence and Understanding.”

I have quoted out this flaming Paragraph as a notable Sample of orthodox Charity, Sense, and Reason; and to shew after what Manner Heretics are to be confuted, and how easy it is, in this Way, to overthrow and set aside all a Man's Arguments, without so much as mentioning any one of them. When our ravished extatic Divine writ this, the hypochondriac

Effluvia shone so refulgently and dazlingly bright about him, that he seems not to have known whether he was in the Body or out. He hoped, that such a dead-doing Blow, at the first Onset, might deter me from ever drawing a Pen against him, or attempting any Answer. But this is the Way of all Maniacs and Hypochondriacs, to make People believe, if possible, by the Roars and Thunder of their Voices, that they have no Fear at all about them, when their very Distemper is Fear, an irresistible unconquerable Fear, which they labour above all Things to conceal, and therefore will never own themselves out of their Senses.

Mr *Chandler*, instead of confuting any Thing that I had offered against the present orthodox Christianity, and sacrificial Scheme of Redemption, thought it sufficient to let the World know what they wanted not to be informed of, that I was once pretty much in the same Way of thinking myself, and that after twenty-five Years farther Examination and Study, I have effectually confuted my former Self. Very well.—And if this may be of any Service to him, I freely own it. But, I believe, he would never have blamed me for confuting my *former Self*, if I had not put him under a Difficulty how to defend his *own present Self*.

It is a mere priestly Trick, or spiritual Juggle, in Mr *Chandler* to perswade the World,



as he fain would do, that his Dispute with me is about the Christian Revelation, of which no Body knows whether he himself has any Notion or Opinion at all. Any Heathen or Infidel might have defended *Revelation* in the same Way, and to as good Purpose as he has done. He might have puffed and blustered with the Word, and made it glare through his Writings; he might have decry'd, run down, and hooted at all that oppose it, without fixing his Point, or meaning any Thing by it, but to gain his own base Ends, and gratify his Malice.

As to the Scripture historical Facts, which he has undertaken to dispute with me, they are certainly Matters of *History*, and not Matters of *Revelation*. And whether they should be true or false, or whether he or I should be in the Right concerning them, I hope he would not put the Credit of his Christianity upon the Truth, Certainty, and Infallibility, of the *Hebrew* Story. For if he should put his high Calling to such a Risk, it might be a Question whether he would be able long to support his Right to a Maintenance.

Nothing seems to vex or plague this Reverend Divine more, than that I, within twenty or thirty Years back, have altered my Opinion, and given such Reasons for it as he cannot answer; while he himself dares not own any such Conviction, whatever his private

vate Sentiments may be. He has a Trade and high Calling, which he has a Right to live by, and should he lay it down, perhaps he might not be able to live so well in any other Way. But in this, however, he has been very favourable to me, that his Prudence would not suffer him to meddle with the Argument, and he had no other Game to play, but to endeavour to perswade People, that they ought not to regard any Arguments or Reasons from those who have no *moral Character*. But the Man who, in Argument, would make this his dernier Resort, ought to look well to his own *moral Character*, and be sure that that should be very clear and unspotted. And whatever Mr Chandler's good Luck may have been in Time past, I dare foretel, without Prophecy, that for the Time to come he will hear of his Faults. He has hereby only set up an Inquisition upon himself, and bound himself over to his good Behaviour, not only for the Time past, but to come.

§. 2. Mr Chandler had entirely routed, disarmed, and absolutely confuted and silenced me before in his Preface, and in his Introduction he sings *Te Deum* for the Victory. But as this is only an idle imaginary Triumph before the Battle, I shall let it pass, and leave the Cause to the Fortune of the Day.

Mr

Mr *Chandler* in his first Chapter comes to consider my Account of the History of *Abraham*; and here he represents me in his preliminary Discourse, or Introduction to this Chapter, as having given an inconsistent contradictory Account of that *Hebrew* Patriarch. I had supposed him to have been a very good Man, and a great Reformer of Religion for that Time, and yet that his Light was not so clear as the Gospel, that he had not got so clear of Superstition and false Religion as *St Paul*, and that in several Things he gave plain Proofs enough of an enthusiastick visionary Faith. But for this my Confessor charges me with Contradiction and Inconsistency, as *Abraham* could not have been a good Man, and a Reformer in his Time, unless he had been all of a Piece, and under as clear a Light then as we are now. But as this too is a Matter farther to be debated, I shall here let it pass.

This first Chapter my learned Adversary has finished in eight long Sections, which takes up the whole Book, all employed in the Story of *Abraham*. A most frightful Prospect, and enough to deter any Man from answering him. If now his Hand is in he should write half a Dozen such Chapters more, the poor *Philosopher* had better leave his Work to shift for itself, than follow such an eternal Declaimer, and unmerciful Accuser. But setting aside the declamatory, dogmatical, and abusive

five pedagogue Parts, I think the Gentleman's Argument may be brought into a very narrow Compass. Had I not considered this, I should have thrown down my Pen as soon as I came to look over the Book, and vowed never to enter the Lists against a Pulpit Orator and *Billingsgate* Disputant.

§. 3. This learned Critic, and Advocate for Revelation, as he would be thought, argues all along upon a Supposition, which he knew I would not grant, and which he could not prove, nor dared so much as to attempt the Proof of; his fundamental false Principle is this, that the *Hebrew* History is of positive Divine Authority, and immediate Inspiration, or that those Historians, in their Account of Things, were all along under the unerring Guidance and infallible Direction of the Holy Ghost. But would any Man well awake, or who had not over-watched himself, and wanted Sleep, have thus argued against an Adversary, upon a Principle which he knew could not be granted, and which he could not prove? or would any one but such an *Advocate* as this, so shamelessly have begg'd the Question? but if after all this Advocate's Shifts, Evasions, and artificial Glosses, this Story concerning *Abraham* should appear to be contradictory, inconsistent, and incredible, and he will yet boldly and resolutely charge it all upon God,

let



let him look to it, for I shall be clear of the Guilt.

I understood and represented this whole Matter so as to make it consistent with Nature, Reason, and human Probability, and with the natural Connexion and Result of the Story from first to last. I gathered and concluded the real Views and Intentions of the Patriarchs in *Canaan*, and of the *Israelites* afterwards in *Egypt*, by their Actions and Conduct all along in fact, which is certainly a clearer and more unexceptionable Indication of Mens Designs, than any pretended Voice, Appearances, and Declarations of God to them, concerning Things, either false and impossible in themselves, or which were never verified in the Event. Where any Text appeared to me either false and contradictory in itself, or inconsistent with other Parts of the Story, and the Event of Things, I chose rather to blame the Historian than God himself, by making *Jehovah* guilty of a Breach of Promise and Oath to *Abraham*, as he must have been, upon the Suppositions of this Advocate and learned Critic, when his Glosses are taken off.

§. 4. But I shall now come to the Particulars of my Charge, and examine how well the Advocate has vindicated the Credit, Infalibility, and Divine Authority, of his *Hebrew* Historian. I must own, that there is scarce any Supposition or Construction of this Story

but what may be affirmed or denied, proved or disproved, from the same Authority. The Historian is so perfectly shattered, and inconsistent with himself, that one might be tempted to imagine it a fictitious Account of things, drawn up by some ignorant enthusiastic Bigots in After-Ages, without any original Truth or Foundation at all.

I thought that God had promised *Abraham* a rich and plentiful Country, or given him the Hopes and Expectations of such a one, because the Country, in which his Seed afterwards gained a Settlement, was a Land *flowing with Milk and Honey*.

But herein I was greatly mistaken. For God promised *Abraham* not a rich and plentiful Country, nor a dry barren Country, or any Country in particular. And yet they went out of *Mesopotamia* to go into the Land of *Canaan*, by Divine Direction, and special Command, and did not go out to seek a Country or Settlement where they could find it, *not knowing whither they went*. But it seems plain to me, that the Historian here conceals the true Reason and Motive of *Abraham's* leaving his Country to seek his Fortune, or get some other Settlement where he could find, or where-ever Providence might cast his Lot. It seems plain enough to me, that *Abraham*, and the reformed Part of the Family, were expelled and driven out of *Mesopotamia*, on the Account of Religion, and their

their having cast off the Gods of their Country. For this we have a very antient *Jewish* Testimony, *Judith* v. 8. that *they drove them out from the Face of their Gods*. This *Achior* was plainly very well acquainted with the *Jewish* History, and, in all Probability, was a *Jewish* Spy, and perfectly in that national Interest, though he pretended to be an *Amorite*, as he headed their Forces. *Mesopotamia*, where *Isaac* and *Jacob* afterwards took their Wives, was always called their Country, and their *Father's House*. And all the Eastern Writers, quoted by *Dr Hyde*, agree in this, that their leaving their original Settlement in *Mesopotamia* was by Force or Expulsion. And that *Urr*, from whence they were first expelled, was in *Mesopotamia*, their native Country, and not in *Chaldea* or *Babylonia*, we have the Testimony of *Stephen the Proto-Martyr*, *Acts* vii. 2. *the God of Glory appeared unto our Father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran*. The narrow Bounds I have here prescribed to myself, will not suffer me to enter into a critical Dissertation upon this Subject. But if *Abraham* had been expelled out of *Mesopotamia*, and could stay there no longer after the Death of his Father, this was a sufficient Reason and Call from God to throw himself upon Providence, and seek some other Country where he could find the best Settlement.

But *Abraham* could not have any Design of settling in *Egypt*, "because, before this Journey into *Egypt*, God had expressly told him, that *Canaan*, and not *Egypt*, was the promised Land; and therefore he did not, could not, go into *Egypt*, as presuming that *Egypt* was the promised Land; unless he presumed upon a Land as promised, that was never promised him, and presumed that not to be the Land that was expressly promised him, p. 16." One would think the Advocate had been an Eye and Ear-Witness of God's appearing to, and talking with, *Abraham* about this Affair, and that he knew the Shape and Voice of God as well as *Abraham* himself did. For his Faith seems equally strong, and he gives us the same Assurance of it, as any Eye or Ear-Witness could have done. And yet he owns, with the Historian, that God had promised *Abraham* no fixed Settlement or Inheritance at all till after 400 Years, and therefore in the mean while, and during his Life-time, why might he not design to sojourn in *Egypt*, or any where else, as well as in *Canaan*? he went down with his whole Substance and Patriarchy, and made all the Provision for settling in *Egypt*, as if he had designed it. He employed his Wife in an Intrigue with the King and his Princes, to procure him Favour, and an easy Situation there. And he never went back to *Canaan* again voluntarily, or

out



out of Choice, till he was forced out upon their discovering the artful Game he had played, and the Cheat he had put upon them concerning his Wife, whom he had put upon them as only his Sister, till she had gained the Point, and procured a favourable Reception for her Husband. And it was certainly a very great Favour in the *Egyptians* now to let him come off as they did, and that they had not put him to Death, or seized all that he had, for thus cheating and imposing upon the King and his Nobles. It is plain that *Abraham*, and his Seed after him, were to be only Sojourners for at least 400 Years; and during this Time they were no more confined or enjoined to sojourn in *Canaan* than in *Egypt*, or any other Country. They lived and settled where they could, or as they found the best Quarters; and had no Claim of Right to one Place more than another.

§. 5. As the *Philistines* appear, from the Account given of them, to have been the most numerous and powerful Body of People in that Country, when *Abraham* came into it, and during the Stay of the Patriarchs there for 210 Years; and as the Inland mountainous Parts of the Country, and the Eastern Plains of *Jordan*, are represented as but very little inhabited, but lay all open and free to *Abraham* and *Lot*; I did, indeed, from hence presume and conclude, that this most considerable

derable and powerful People might have first settled there, and given the Name to the whole Country, and I think so still. Many Instances might be given from the most learned Critics, where *Moses* gives Names to Countries and Places very different from their original and most antient Names. And this same Country, when *Joseph* was sold into *Egypt*, was called not *Canaan*, but the *Land of the Hebrews*, by the *Egyptians*. The Land of the *Hebrews*, i. e. *Ibrim* or *Transfluvians*, because the Inhabitants of that Country came and settled there from beyond the River, and spoke the Language of the Countries about the *Euphrates* and *Tigris*. But whether this be so or no, as it is a Matter of no Consequence to him or me, I would not much dispute it with him, or waste Time about such a Trifle. And had it been of any Consequence to the main Argument, relating to Revelation, or supernatural Religion, I verily believe this pretended Advocate would have taken no Notice of it, as he has not done of any Thing else to the Purpose.

In this second Section the learned Author displays much of his Reading, and critical Skill, about the Word *Canaan* and *Canaanites*, the Extent and Boundaries of the Country, and particular Situation of the People called *Canaanites*. But here he was got into a Wood, out of which he might probably never

never have found his Way, had he not run through it at blind Random.

But it must be owned, that the *Hebrew* Historian, throughout the Pentateuch, has given such a dark confused Account of this Land of *Canaan*, *Palestine*, or the promised Land, that it is not easy to collect or settle any certain determinate Boundaries to the Country from what he has said of it. He always takes Care to keep up the Character of an Oracle, which is Ambiguity, *Gen. x. 19.* *And the Border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar and Gaza; as thou goest to Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lashab. Sidon, Gerar, and Gaza, lay all in a Line, being Sea-ports on the Mediterranean; and from Gaza to Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. was a Diagonal Line, crossing all the Southern Part of the Country. But the Distances from Sidon to Gaza, and from Gaza to Sodom and Lashab, could bound or limit no Land or Country at all; but the Land Northward of Gaza, or as far North as Sidon, might have run Eastward as far as the Euphrates, from whence Abraham came, for any Limitation the Historian here makes. In the four preceding Verses of this Xth Chapter, ver. 15, 16, 17, and 18, we have a particular Account, or List, of the several Tribes and Families of the Canaanites, or Posterity and Descendants of Canaan. And Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth,*  
and

and the Jebusite, and the Emorite, [or Amorite] and the Girgashite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemorite, and the Hamathite. And afterwards were the Families of the Canaanites spread abroad. And the Border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, &c. as before.

In the XIIth Chapter *Abraham* is represented as coming into *Canaan*, and travelling thro' the whole Country southward into *Egypt*; for there being then a Famine in the Land, and the Patriarch could make no long Stay there, but having built an Altar or two upon these barren Mountains, continued his Journey through it into *Egypt*. As *Abraham* came from the *Euphrates* through *Tyria* into *Palestine* or *Canaan*, he must enter the Country in the North, somewhere between *Hamath* and Mount *Herman-baal*. And therefore going still southward, he could pass through no other Country but *Canaan* in his Way to *Egypt*, nor is any other Land or Country mentioned that he journey'd through in this Expedition. The Length of *Canaan* therefore, at this Time, was reckoned from *Sidon*, *Hamath*, and Mount *Herman*, on the North, to the Borders of *Egypt* on the South. This whole Land or Country, in it's utmost Extent of Length and Breadth, God is said to have promised and sworn to *Abraham* and his Seed as an Inheritance for ever, or as long as they should continue a Nation or People.

*Abraham*



*Abraham*, according to *Usher* and most Chronologers, stayed in *Egypt* about two Years, and then his Artifice and Prevarication concerning his Wife being found out, he was forced back again into *Canaan*. After his Return, and when *Lot* and he had separated, one taking the *Eastern Plains*, and the other the Inland *Amorites*, Mountains of *Canaan*, which were then all free and open to them, God appeared to *Abraham* again in a Vision or Dream, and renewed the same Promise, not only of the Land of *Canaan*, but all the *Western Asia* which he passed through, from the River of *Egypt* unto the great River, the River *Euphrates*. See for this *Gen. xv. ver. 1, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21*. But in this Dream, Vision, or Appearance of God to *Abraham*, something was represented and certainly foretold by the Oracle that never was true in Fact, as the whole Story afterward evidently proves. It is said, *ver. 13, 14. And he said unto Abraham, Know of a surety, that thy Seed shall be a Stranger in a Land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred Years. And also that Nation whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great Substance. This* four hundred Years Servitude, and being afflicted, oppressed, and treated ill, can refer to nothing but *Egypt*; for in *Canaan*, for two hundred and fifteen Years, they were treated well, had very good Quarters, and lived and

acted almost as they pleased. When they went down into *Egypt*, they met with so good a Reception, that the very best Part of the Country was put in their Possession, and they were intrusted with all the Force, Government, and Direction of the Country under *Joseph's* Management, while *Pharoah* had only reserved to himself the Name and empty Title of King. This Prosperity in *Egypt* continued during *Joseph's* time, and till that Generation which came out of *Canaan*, were gone off; and we hear of no Struggle or Opposition between the *Egyptians* and these *Hebrew* Shepherds, till a little before the Birth of *Moses*, perhaps the War might begin twenty or thirty Years before that, and therefore surely they could not be oppressed, afflicted, and ill-treated, by any strange Nation in their sojourning for four hundred Years, or scarcely more than an hundred Years. But I have so largely considered this Matter already, in my Introduction to the Third Volume of the *Moral Philosopher*, that I shall say no more of it here, till the Advocate thinks fit to pursue his Charge, as promised.

As God had frequently appeared to *Abraham* in Dreams and Visions, and promised him Things that never came to pass as expected, so he is said to have continued the same Favour to *Isaac* and *Jacob*. He appeared in the same manner to *Isaac* before the Famine had forced him off the Mountains into the Plains

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of *Philistia*, Gen. xxvi. 2, 3, 4. And again; after he came out of *Philistia*, as having been expelled from that Part of the Country upon their discovering the Artifice and Intrigues of him and his Wife to gain Favour and a Settlement there, Gen. xxvi. 24. *Jacob* in his Way to *Padan-aram*, when he fled from his Brother, after having cheated him out of the Blessing and Birth-right, had the same Vision and Divine Promises renewed to him in a Dream. And he dreamed, and behold, a Ladder set upon the Earth, and the Top of it reached to Heaven; and behold, the Angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac; the Land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give, and to thy Seed, &c. Gen. xxviii. 12——17. And *Jacob* awaked out of his Sleep, and he said, Surely, the Lord is in this Place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this Place! this is no other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven. I shall here make no other Use of this, but just to observe, what Notions these Hebrew Patriarchs had of God and his Infinite Divine Perfections, and after what manner they saw and conversed with the Deity.

According to *Moses's* Account of *Canaan* in the Land of Promise, Numb. xxxiv. their South Border was to extend with some Windings and Turnings, from the Wilderness of

*Zin*, and the south Part of the dead or Salt-Sea, to the River of *Egypt*, where it falls into the Sea or Mediterranean, *ver.* 3, 4, 5. The West Border was to be the great Sea from the River of *Egypt* Northward, *ver.* 6. The North Border was to be from the great Sea Eastward, to Mount *Hor*, *Hamath*, *Zedad*, *Zipbron*, *Hazar-enan*. The East Border from *Hazar-enan*, to the Salt-Sea, *i. e.* to the South of the Salt-Sea or *Lashab* as before.

But *Joshua*, a little before his Death, having finished his Conquests, and divided the whole Land by Lot, as well the conquered as unconquered Parts of it, gives a little more particular Description of the Land promised, and which yet remained unconquered. The Reader will find this Account of all that Part of *Canaan* in which they had yet made no Settlement, or got any Possessions, *Josh.* xiii. 2—7. By this Description any one, who has the least Acquaintance with the Geography of the Country, will see that they had yet only conquered a Part of the Inland Mountains, which was afterwards properly, and by Way of Distinction from the rest of the Land, call'd *Judea*. But all *Philistia*, all the South Coast of the Mediterranean to the River of *Egypt*, all the Inland Southern Plains of the *Geshurites*, and the Country southward between the Mediterranean and the Salt-Sea, with all the Northern Parts of the Land, including *Sidon*, the *Trachonites*, *Cesarea Philippi*, and *Galilee*, remained yet



yet unconquered. From what has been observed and compared concerning the Extent and Description of this promised Land, or Land of *Canaan*, we may conclude, that its Boundary southward was from the River *Siber* to *Sodom* and *Lashah* eastward; and on the North, from *Sidon* on the Mediterranean to Mount *Hermon-baal* eastward. And its length thro' the midland Country over the Mountains, was from the entering in of *Hamath* in the North, to the Desert of *Cadesh-barnea*, from North to South.

This is the Land which is said to have been promised and sworn to *Abraham* and his *Seed*, as an Inheritance for ever. And now *Joshua*, just before their Entrance into it, assures them in the strongest Terms, as from the Lord, that this Promise was now to be made good to them, and that they should certainly conquer and take Possession of the Land. *Every Place that the Sole of your Foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. There shall not any Man be able to stand before thee all the Days of thy Life*, Josh. i. 3, 5. How well this agrees with what follow'd, I need not say.

It is very probable, that *Jericho*, the first City they destroy'd, was surrendered to them by the Treachery of *Rabab* and her Family, whom the Spies had agreed with for that Purpose, and promised to spare them on that Condition. And whether it was for such a  
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signal Piece of Service, or not, *Salmon*, the Prince of the Tribe of *Judah*, afterward marry'd this Woman, by whom he had *Boaz*, the Father of *Obed*, the Father of *Jesse*. Had there been a Miracle, and the Hand of God in the Case, why might not the Walls of *Ai*, and of every other strong Town, have fallen down with the Breath of their Rams Horns, as well as the Walls of *Jericho*? especially when God had so absolutely promised them the most complete Conquest and Possession of the Country, and that not a Man should have Heart and Spirit enough to stand before them: But if they were let in by Treachery, they might take the City as easily as if the Walls had fallen down. But the Case was otherwise at *Ai*; for upon their first Attack, they were warmly received, repulsed, and driven back, to their great Amazement and Confusion. As *Joshua* had given them such positive Assurances but just before, that no Man should be able to stand before them, this Defeat drove him almost to his Wits end, till he bethought him of a Contrivance or Piece of Policy, how to bring himself off. It was a thousand to one but some Body or other in the Plunder of *Jericho* might have saved and concealed some of the richer Goods; and this being discovered, was to be the Reason why they had been repulsed and beaten at *Ai*. And this Offence being found and proved upon *Achan*, he and his Sons and Daughters, and Sheep and Cattle, were

were stoned with Stones, and then with his Tent and whole Substance burnt with Fire; How this could agree with the Wisdom, Justice, and Mercy of God, or what Atonement could be made by destroying the Innocent with the Guilty, might be a Question. But we have many such remarkable exemplary Instances of Justice in the God of *Israel*, who was always very revengeful upon the least Provocation. But *Joshua* saw by this Instance, that it would not be good Policy in time to come, for the Lord to forbid *Israel* the Plunder, and therefore they were suffered to take it at *Ai*, and every where afterward. They could not have taken *Ai*, but by a Stratagem, by drawing the People out of the Town, and surrounding them with their Ambushes, for otherwise they might have found then that the Lord was not so much with *Joshua* as he pretended, as they had Reason enough to conclude afterwards; and the Truth is, that throughout this whole Story from first to last, nothing appears but human Policy, the most barbarous and savage Cruelty, and unjust Invasion of other Mens Rights and Properties, against all the Laws of Nature and Nations. And in this there could be nothing of God, but the Profanation of his Name, and Prostitution of his most Sacred Authority.

When God called *Abraham* out of *Mesopotamia*, his native Country, and promised to bring him to a Land which he would settle  
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upon him and his Seed as an everlasting Inheritance; *Abraham* surely could never have thought God his Friend and exceeding great Reward, had he then known or believed that God would give him no Inheritance at all, but that he must be forced all his Life to wander up and down from one Place and Country to another, to seek an Abode where he could find it, and his Seed after to be Sojourners and Slaves among Strangers and Enemies four hundred Years. A Grant in Reversion of any Land in the World after four hundred Years can be worth nothing in Hand, nor would *Abraham* have given any thing for such a reversionary Grant. What would any Man give now for a Grant in Reversion of the whole Land of *England*, to be settled upon his Family four hundred Years hence; or what could he make of such a Right tho' he had God's own Security for it? But the Story of the four hundred Years might serve a Turn well enough, when the Time was expired in the Days of *Moses*. It might animate the then present Generation with Hopes of a speedy Deliverance, and safe Settlement in one of the richest and most fruitful Countries in the World. But had this unhappy People then known, that they were to suffer Hunger, Thirst, and Cold, in a dry and barren Wilderness forty Years, without any Succour or Subsistence but what wild uncultivated Nature provided for them; and that then they were  
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only to force their Way at the Expence of their Lives and Blood into a small Part of a Country, where they were to live in almost continual Wars and Subjection, surrounded with mortal implacable Enemies more powerful than they, and that they must thus sweat and bleed, groan and struggle, for above 400 Years more; had they known, or but suspected, this, I say, they would have taken up with any Settlement, upon any Terms, where they were, and not have provoked the *Egyptians* to drive them out, and attempt their utter Destruction, by putting themselves under the Conduct of *Moses*.

§. 6. From what has been said we may conclude, that the Conquest of *Canaan*, in the Time of *Moses*, *Joshua*, the *Elders*, and the *Judges* after them, was very imperfect, and could not deserve the Name of a Conquest of any Land or Country. They had only, with a vast Effusion of Blood on both Sides, made a Settlement in the middle inland mountainous Parts of *Canaan* or *Palestine*, then called the *Amorite Mountains*, and afterwards the *Hill-Country*, or Mountains of *Judea*. And this small Part of the Country they were confined to, as appears from the whole Story for at least 450 Years, or from the first Invasion of *Canaan*, to the 10th or 12th Year of the Reign of *David*.

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But in this small Tract of Ground, which, all together, was scarce a fifth Part of the whole Land or Country then called, and still known by, the Land of *Canaan*, or promised Land. And even in this small Tract, or Part of the Country, they had no particular District separate and entire to themselves, as a peculiar Nation or People. What the Historian, who is the Advocate's Oracle, was forced to own in this Case, is very remarkable; and therefore I shall quote it verbatim. *Judges* iii. 1—6. *Now these are the Nations which the Lord left to prove Israel by them, (even as many of Israel as had not known all the Wars of Canaan; only that the Generations of the Children of Israel might know to teach them War, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof) namely, five Lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon, unto the entering in of Hamath. And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken to the Commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their Fathers by the Hand of Moses. And the Children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites: and they took their Daughters to be their Wives, and gave their Daughters to their Sons, and served their Gods.*

It may be necessary here to make a few Observations upon this remarkable and very oracular Piece of History. And, first, it is dubious what the Historian should mean by distinguishing the *Canaanites* from the *Hittites*, *Amorites*, *Perizzites*, *Hivites*, and *Jebusites*, and all the particular Tribes or Families of the *Canaanites*, or Descendants of *Canaan*. Were there *Canaanites* in general distinct from any particular Tribe or Family from *Canaan*, like human Nature without a human Person, or Man in the Abstract without any particular Man, or *a Man*? But if one may be allowed to guess at the Meaning of the Oracle, I should think, that by the *Canaanites* is to be understood all those Tribes from *Canaan* their common Father, among whom the *Israelites* had made no Conquest, or taken any Possession; and that where the particular Tribes are mentioned, we must understand it of those *Canaanites* among whom this People of *Israel*, who had gained some Possession and Settlement. But, perhaps, much might be said on the other Side, and, I believe, it is impossible to prove any from this oracular Account of Things, but the contrary might as well be proved from the same Authority. Was it not so, the opposite Schemes of *Churchism* could not subsist, and the learned Gentlemen of the sacred Function might be no wiser or richer than other Men.

*Secondly*, It may be farther observed here, that God gave the *Israelites* Commission and exprefs Command to do what he never enabled them to do, and what he never designed they should do. They were commanded to drive out all the *Canaanites*, and suffer none of them to remain or live in the Land. For the Oracle makes the Lord, the *God of Israel*, give very good Reasons why the *Canaanites* were not to be drove out. They were to remain among them to *teach them War*, such as had not been well trained up in it before. Had it not been for this, they might have lived in Peace, Ease, and Plenty, and then they would not have worshipped the *Lord of Hosts*, or God of War.

*Thirdly*, But these *Israelites* made Alliances, and contracted Affinities, with the People of the Country, and worshipped their Gods, and this was the Reason they could not drive them out, and inherit the whole Land. But it seems very plain from the whole Story, that this was a Matter of *Necessity*, and not otherwise of *Choice*. They could not drive out any of the *Canaanites* in the North, nor entirely dispossess any one single Tribe of them in the South; and therefore they were forced to live among them, and to make the best Terms with them they could. Without such Alliances and Affinities it must have been impossible, humanly speaking, that they should have kept their Ground so well as they did, while



while living among, and surrounded with, so many Nations, more powerful than themselves. They had found by Experience, for forty Years in the Wilderness, and at least forty more in *Canaan*, during the Lives of *Joshua* and the *Elders*, that worshipping their own Lord of Hosts, or God of War, gave them no better Success than the Gods of other Nations. For when they came to *Canaan*, it does not appear that they forsook the God of *Israel* till he had forsaken them, by not fulfilling his Promise and Oath to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, as they had been persuaded by *Moses* and *Joshua* he would do, and they did not, I presume, then expect or know that they must wait above 400 Years longer for the Accomplishment of the Promises.

But if we may believe the same Historian, they had now nothing farther to expect, but every Thing that God had ever promised them was fully and completely accomplished already, *Josh. xxiii. 14.* *And behold, this Day I am going the Way of all the Earth, and ye know in all your Hearts, and in all your Souls, that not one Thing hath failed which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one Thing hath failed thereof. There failed not ought of any good Thing which the Lord had spoken unto the House of Israel: all came to pass, Chap. xxi. 45. Josh. xxiii. 9. For the Lord has driven out from before you great Nations and strong: but*  
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*as for you, no Man has been able to stand before you unto this Day.* But what one single Nation or Tribe did they ever drive out, which was not after this left to plague and revenge upon them? Did not the *Amalekites, Philistines*, and all the *Canaanites*, whom they could not drive out, stand before them, and defy their utmost Force still four hundred and fifty Years longer? But such absolute conditional Promises, Prophecies, and oracular Declarations, must always have two different Meanings and contrary Interpretations.

When *Joshua* is made to declare all this, there were but two Tribes of the nine and half that had received any Inheritance or Possession as their own, on the *Palestine* or western Side of *Jordan*, Josh. xviii 2. *And there remained among the Children of Israel seven Tribes, which had not yet received their Inheritance.* I will not here dispute the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, which came over *Jordan* with the other nine Tribes, whether they had yet received their Inheritance or not; but that the Tribe of *Benjamin*, which is reckoned with *Judah*, had not yet received their whole Inheritance, is very plain. *As for the Jebusites, the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Children of Judah, could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the Children of Judah unto this Day, [the Days of Samuel,] Josh. xv. 63. And the Children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem, but the*  
*Jebusites*

*Jebusites dwell with the Children of Benjamin in Jerusalem, unto this Day.* That is *Judah*, and *Benjamin* dwelt with the *Jebusites*, and made the best Terms they could with them, by Alliances, Intermarriages, and all necessary Compliances in Religion, or the Worship of their Gods, as the whole Story abundantly proves.

From what has been here observed and quoted, I think it is very evident, that these *Israelites*, for four hundred and fifty Years made no Conquest of *Canaan*, nor any entire separate Part of it, but they invaded, destroyed, and took Possession of many Towns and Cities at first, by putting all to the Sword where they came; and then secured their Settlement by Alliances, Affinities, and Conformity in Religion. And this being so, it is very oracular in the Historian all along to say, that the Reason why they did not then conquer the whole Country, and drive out all the Inhabitants, was because they forsook their own God, and worshipped the Gods of those Nations; when it appears to me very plain, from the whole Story, and the natural Construction of it, that they had no other Way to keep their Ground, or to prevent their utter Destruction, after so bold, so wicked, and unnatural Attempt, under a Pretence of Commis-sion from a Lord of Hosts, or God of War of their own, that no Body else ever knew or believed in.

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As the exact circumstantial Accomplishment of God's Promise and Oath to *Abraham*, renewed to *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *Moses*, and *Joshua*, from time to time, for four hundred and seventy Years, is the main Part of the Argument between this Advocate and me; I have been the more particular in this Case, to give him an Opportunity, if he thinks fit, to write two or three Volumes more about it, which he might easily do, if God should spare his Life and Strength, and sound Understanding. But however this should be, I thought it might save me some Trouble in answering to his following Accusations and criminal Charges as to which I now must upon Oath defend myself.

§. 7. That *Palestine*, rather than *Canaan*, was the original Name of that Country, was only a Guess or Conjecture of mine; but I would not dispute with such a Critic about a Name. Perhaps neither *Canaan* nor *Palestine* might have been the first or original Name. But how the *Hebrew* Oracle came to distinguish the *Canaanites* from the *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Amorites*, *Jebusites*, and all the particular Tribes and Families descended from *Canaan*, is a Mystery to me, the unfolding of which I must leave to the Advocate's critical Skill. But the *Canaanites* in general, abstracted from all their particular Tribes, I suppose, is human Nature, without any human Person. But as for these *Canaanites* in general, 'tis certain, that  
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the *Israelites* never drove them out, and perhaps they may be there still ; nor did they drive out any one whole particular Tribe of them, but had their Towns and Cities mix'd among them, and sometimes lived and incorporated with them in the same Towns as I have proved already.

The next grand Question concerning the Christian Revelation is, Whether the Land of *Canaan*, in the Days of *Abraham* and the Patriarchs, with respect I mean to the inland mountainous Parts of it, afterwards call'd the *Hill-Country* of *Judea*, was fruitful or unfruitful, cultivated or uncultivated, populous, or in a manner void and uninhabited ? I would grant the Advocate any thing in Reason, and wish I could do any thing to please and pacify this angry Priest : Let us suppose then, that these Mountains were as fruitful and well cultivated in *Abraham's* Time, as in the Days of *Moses* and *Joshua* ; that they abounded with Wells and Springs of Water, and flow'd with Milk and Honey ; that *Abraham* and the Patriarchs, for two hundred and fifteen Years, could find no Room there, without destroying and driving out the old Inhabitants, and taking Possession of their Towns and Cities, that when they were forced to dig their Wells in the Plains of *Philistia*, and strive with *Abimelech's* Herdsmen for Water, they did it without Necessity, when they might have been as well provided for on their own Mountains, as the *Canaanites* were

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afterward ; and that there never was in this two hundred and fifteen Years a Famine or Scarcity here, but what was extended to *Philistia*, *Zidonia*, and even to *Egypt*. All this I am willing to grant the Advocate, rather than be plagued with such trifling, if the Reader will grant it ; and what can one do more to please him ? 'Tis perfectly ridiculous, to quote Mr *Shaw*, as he does, p. 45. to prove the Fertility and Cultivation of those Mountains in the Days of *Abraham*. *But how were all these Flocks, and Herds, and numerous Servants to be maintained, in so barren and desert a Country, as the Philosopher tells us Canaan was ?* p. 48. But how were all the vast Flocks and Herds maintained forty Years in the Wilderness, which the *Israelites* carry'd out of *Egypt* with them, for they did not leave a Hoof behind them : Did their Sheep and Cattle eat Manna and Quails too ? 'Tis possible for great Numbers of People to subsist in a very barren Country, especially when they have good Neighbours, and can be received and entertained elsewhere in case of Necessity.

§. 8. The Advocate, in his third Section, comes to consider the Case of *Abraham's* denying his Wife in *Egypt*. And here *Abraham*, it seems, did not perswade or prevail with *Sarai* to deny her being his Wife, but only to affirm, that *she* was his Sister. And this was a real Truth, *she* having the same Father,

*ther, tho' a different Mother from himself, p. 53.* But if I am not more mistaken than ever, this was not a *real Truth*, but a *real Falsehood*. *Sarai* was not *Abraham's* half Sister, but his half Niece, or his half Brother's Daughter. I think the most learned Critics are agreed, that *Sarai*, as *Abraham* chose to call her when he had marry'd her, was the same Person with *Ischab*, as mentioned *Gen. xi. 29.* the Daughter of *Haran*, and Sister of *Milcab*. There is not the least Hint or Intimation in the whole Story, of any Daughter that *Terab* had. But as *Haran* had two, *Abraham* and *Nabor*, two whole Brothers, might marry two Sisters Daughters of *Haran*, who was but their half Brother. But perhaps Father and Brother, or Sister and Niece, may be all one in *Hebrew*. But the Method which the Advocate has taken to bring off the Patriarch, is very extraordinary. He thinks it a less Reflection upon *Abraham* to have lived in Incest with *Sarai* all his Days, as he must with his own Sister by the same Father, than to have been guilty of an Artifice, Fraud, or Dissimulation, in this particular Instance. 'Tis plain from the Text, that the King of *Egypt*, by her being his Sister, took it for granted that she was not his Wife; and *Abraham* and *Sarai* too could not but design that they should understand it so. And whether his sending his Wife to Court, and putting her into the Power of the King and his Officers, was not, in Consequence, pro-

stituting her Chastity, and leaving her to jilt and intrigue for Court Favours, and a Settlement in *Egypt*, I would leave any unprejudiced Reader to judge. And therefore, that God should plague *Pharaoh* and his House for *Abraham's* Artifice and Fraud, while they were perfectly innocent whatever had happened, could not have been credible, had it not come from an Oracle. But *Sarai* was to play the same Game afterwards in *Philistia*; and, as is evident, for the same End or Purpose, to gain, if possible, a more comfortable Settlement, than their barren Mountains. That *Sarai* was a Woman of great Artifice and Intrigue, and very necessary to her Husband in this Account, is plain enough. But that she should be so exceeding beautiful and tempting as to her Person after sixty-five, which was her Age when they came into *Canaan*, is really very uncommon, and could scarce be taken but from an Oracle.

But whatever might be said of *Sarai*, as to her being *Abraham's* Sister, I hope it will not be said of *Rebekah* too, that she was *Isaac's* Sister. But being a Woman of the same Artifice, Intrigue, and Power of Insinuation, she was to act the same Part in that same Country, the rich and fertile Plains of *Philistia*; the same Part, I say, that *Sarai* had done before, *Gen. xxvi. 7.* By this Means *Isaac* had great Favour and Honours paid him in *Philistia*, and grew vastly rich in Flocks and Herds, till the



the Fraud and Cheat was discovered, and then he was forced to leave that Part of the Country. See *Gen.* xxvi. 7—17. *Usher*, and most Chronologers, place this Descent into *Philistia* fifty-three Years after the Marriage of *Isaac* and *Rebekah*. And, therefore, if she was then but seventeen, she must have been now seventy, an Age when most Women are past the Bloom of their Beauty, though the artful intriguing Part may be much improved. What the Advocate offers farther in this Section, is so perfectly wild and trifling, that I should think it losing Time, and abusing the Reader's Patience, to take any farther Notice of it. He may be indulged in the Faculty and Gift of preaching, without touching or hurting any Argument in the World.

The Advocate, in his fourth Section, comes to consider the *Promises* made by God to *Abraham*, of the Land of *Canaan*. But I can see nothing in this long Ramble of Insolence and Abuse, but what has been sufficiently obviated and cut off already in the fifth and sixth Sections foregoing; and should have said no more upon this Head, were it not to shew the wretched Shifts this Advocate is driven to in Defence of Revelation. And really without some abler Defender of the *Faith*, I should look upon the Cause of such a *Revelation* as in a desperate Way.

He could not but know, that I all along used the Words *Canaan* and *Palestine* as equivalent

valent Terms for that whole Land, which is still called by the same Names, and delineated in all the Maps of the Country, both antient and modern. By *Palestine* or *Canaan* I meant that whole Land or Country, through which *Abraham* travelled, from the Borders of *Syria* into *Egypt*, and which is bounded Westward by the *Mediterranean*, and Eastward by Mount *Hermon-baal* in the North, and the Borders of *Sodom* in the South. But he would represent me, by *Palestine*, as meaning *Philistia*, strictly so called, as distinguished from the other Provinces or Parts of the Country. But this is a mere trifling Instance of the Advocate's Ingenuity.

But the Advocate, in this learned critical Defence of the Faith, is greatly perplexed about these *Canaanites*, who they were, from whence they came, from whom descended, and what Part of the Country they inhabited. He can give no Account of any Thing of this, and yet is forced, with the Historian, to distinguish the *Canaanites* from all those particular Tribes and Families which were descended from *Canaan*, and dispersed in this Country. By the *Canaanites* I always understood the several Nations or Tribes descended from *Canaan*, settled in this Country, from whom it took it's Name. And I was so simple as to imagine, that the *Canaanites* were those People of the Land whom the *Israelites*, under *Joshua*, were to drive out. But it seems

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I was mistaken; and when I called the *Amorites*, or *Emorites*, *Canaanite Mountaineers*, 'tis just as good Sense, as if I should call the *Highlanders of Scotland* *Welsh Mountaineers*.

But, I believe, our *Hebrew Critic* must go farther than the *Highlands of Scotland*, or the *Welsh Mountains*, even to the *Mountains of the Moon*, to find out his *Canaanites* that were not derived from *Canaan*, nor from any other known Person, or Part of this World. But I cannot think the *Historian* was lunatic too, that he intended to distinguish the *Canaanites* from the whole Body, and every particular Tribe or Family of *Canaan*. By *Canaanites* he might mean that People in gross, and when he designed to notify those of them among whom the *Israelites* did or did not gain Settlements, he mentions their particular Tribes, and describes their Situation.

Here the *Advocate*, in order to make good the Promises to *Abraham*, settles the Boundaries; and he makes the *Euphrates* the Eastern Boundary. For the Land promised to *Abraham*, was to extend from the great Sea to the *Euphrates*. *Abraham*, saith he, could not possibly understand any Thing else by that Assurance of the Land, from the River of Egypt to the *Euphrates*, but the Country of *Canaan*, properly so called, situate between those two Rivers, and inhabited by those Nations that are particularly mentioned to him, p. 78. What  
*Abraham*

*Abraham* could or could not possibly understand by this, is more than he or I can tell; but if by the Country extending from *Sibor* to the *Euphrates*, he did not understand the Country thus bounded, I think he could not believe the Promise.

God might mention some of the Nations within these Boundaries, as many of them as lay within *Abraham's* View or Knowledge, without mentioning all. But if the *Euphrates* was not to be the Boundary eastward of *Abraham's* Grant, the *Indus* or *Ganges* might have been as well mentioned, had those Rivers been then known. But when the Promise and Grant, or Reversion of this vast Country after 400 Years, was made to *Abraham*, he was in a deep Sleep, and under a Horror of great Darkness, and a smoking Furnace and burning Lamp passed before him, Gen. xv. 17. All this was after Sun-set, when it was dark, a proper Time and Temper, no doubt, to receive Revelations from God. But it was enough to throw the Patriarch into such Glooms and Horrors, to be now assured, that he himself, for his own Part, was never to have any Inheritance or certain Settlement at all; and that his Seed after him were to be Sojourners and Slaves 400 Years in a strange Land. A glorious Promise this indeed, and a vast Encouragement to *Abraham*, had the Case been really so.

After



After this our *Hebrew Critic* has a long abusive Ramble for twenty Pages together, in which he knows not what to make of the Promise, whether they were to have the whole or only a Part of the Land, or whether they were so much as to possess any whole entire Part of it to themselves, their being mixed every where with the idolatrous Nations, almost in continual Subjection to some or other of them, and forced to worship their Gods, might be all consistent with the Promise and express Command for any Thing he knows. If nothing was absolutely given or promised, if the whole Grant was only conditional, and the Conditions never complied with, it would be in vain to talk of the Accomplishment of the Promise to *Abraham*, *Moses*, *Joshua*, or any Body else; and then the Advocate might have spared himself all this Trouble, if he had had no other Design or View in it, as he plainly had.

I had said, that the *Israelites*, even in *David's* Time, were never in Possession of a tenth Part of the Country, from the *Mediterranean* to the *Euphrates*, upon which the Advocate thus exclaims, p. 99. *What, were not the Israelites in Possession of a tenth Part of it, when gathered from Sihor to Hamath, and when they were mustered from Beershebah in Philistia up to Zidon and Tyre? the Man knows nothing of what he writes that asserts this, but betrays his own Blunders, and not the*

*Mistakes of the Hebrew Historian.* Whether this should be my Blunder, or his Insolence, I am the Man that has asserted it, and must still abide by it, that the whole Land of *Canaan* was not a tenth Part of the Country bounded by the great Sea and the *Euphrates*, from West to East, and these Boundaries are expressly mentioned in God's supposed or fictitious Promise to *Abraham* and his Seed. But the Advocate here, in his splenetic Extasy, would make me say, that the *Israelites* were never in Possession of a tenth Part of the Land of *Canaan*, which would have been as absurd as his Insult upon it.

I agree with the Advocate in what follows, and what he brings the Matter to at last ; that God promised *Abraham* nothing certain or determinate, but left him and his Seed to shift for themselves, and get Settlements any where, or by any Means, as well as they could. They were to cast themselves upon Chance, common Providence, and the Event of Things, like all other Nations, and God had as little to do with them as with any People in the World. The Promise of any Inheritance, in Reversion after 400 Years, could not then have been worth Thanks. And, therefore, whatever has been said of God's peculiar Favours, Appearance, Revelations, Oaths, and Promises, to *Abraham* and his Seed, can be only an Abuse and Profanation of his sacred Name and Authority. I think, the whole Story of the  
Nation,

Nation, from first to last, proves this, and, I believe, no Advocates for Superstition and Enthusiasm, Dreams and Visions, can ever be able to prove the contrary. I am very sure, that God never promised any thing that never came to pass; and the Advocate has no other Way to work himself off, but by owning in effect, that God never promised or secured to them any Thing at all. One cannot better judge of the Sense of the Promise or Prophecy to *Abraham*, than by the Construction and Application *Joshua* made of it, when he came to lead the People into the Country. They were then assured from the Lord, that the whole Land would be open and of easy Access to them, that they should possess all the Ground they could set a Foot upon, and that no Man should be able, or have Heart and Spirit enough, to stand before them. And the Reason now why they did not conquer wherever they came was not their Idolatry, or their worshipping other Gods, for during the Lives of *Joshua* and the Elders after him, they continued to worship their own true God, the Lord of Hosts, or the *Israelite* God of War, and yet he gave them but very ill Success. No wonder therefore they should afterwards worship other Gods, when they saw, and had found by about forty Years Experience, they could so little depend on their own. But to avoid Repetitions here, I must refer again, as before, to §. 6.

§. 9. The Advocate in his fifth Section calls me to a severe Account, for what I had said about *Abraham* and the Patriarchs in *Canaan*, that they discovered no Intention of settling there, and made no Provision for it. They never so much as built a House, or purchased any Lands, seeming to wait an Opportunity for a better Settlement. And when after 215 Years, by the Stress of Famine, and a Turn of Providence in their Favour, they were called into *Egypt*, tho' they pretended at first that they were come only to sojourn there for a small time during the Famine in *Canaan*; yet when they found they had changed their Situation and Country so much for the better, there is not the least Hint or Intimation of any Design or Intention they had of returning to *Canaan*, while they had better Quarters, and could live in greater Prosperity in *Egypt*. Had there been any such Design while *Joseph* had all the Power of *Egypt* in his Hands, they might easily have been settled in the Possession of their whole promised Land, without the Effusion of one Drop of their Blood. The *Egyptians* then must have done it for them. But, it seems, they were not to take Possession of their promised Land till the 400 Years were expired, though they might have been kept out of it 40 or 400 Years longer, and never have gained a peaceable Settlement in it at last, without affecting the Truth of the Promise.



Promise. But they never attempted the promised Land till they were expelled *Egypt*, and then they cursed and rebelled against *Moses*, for bringing them into a worse Condition than ever they had been in before, and would fain have gone back to *Egypt* again, and submitted to that People upon their own Terms. I might here appeal to any unprejudiced Reader, whether in this whole Story there is any Intention or Design discovered of ever going back to *Canaan* till they had no Safety in *Egypt*; or whether *Abraham*, in his first attempt to settle here, discovered any Design of going back to *Canaan* again, till his Fraud and Artifice by his Wife had been detected, and he was forced to quit the Country? I think such Facts, and natural Consequences of Things, speak themselves. But there is no disputing with an eternal Preacher, who has always an Oracle at hand to back him, and by which he is able to prove any Thing, whether probable or improbable, true or false.

I had said, that *Abraham* and *Isaac* might have conquered the Country, or any Part of it, had they thought fit, much more easily than the *Israelites* did afterward, when they were forced to cut their Way into an Enemy's Country, and live among them upon any Terms rather than perish in the Wilderness. But my saying that those Patriarchs, *Abraham* or *Isaac*, had Power enough to  
have

have conquered that Country, or so much as they needed of it, had they thought fit to have settled there, has put the Advocate out of all manner of Temper. And here, having no Argument against it, and not being able to confute it, he is forced to rave, rage, swell, and triumph, as if his Spleen had been bursting. But all his Outcries and Triumphs are Signals of Distress; and he has only prov'd, that when he cannot reason, he can rail.

This Critic seems to judge of the Numbers and Strength of Nations, and Success of Armies in Battle in those early Ages, as if the Earth was as populous, and their Armies as numerous then as now. He had never considered, or made any Computation of the gradual Increase of Mankind, or what Proportion in Strength and Power three hundred and eighteen Men in *Abraham's* time would have to the same or any other Number now. Perhaps he may think that three hundred Men in *Abraham's* time were no more as to any Power of Conquest, or Force of repelling an Enemy, than the same Number of Forces would be now. But let us suppose, that the Increase of Mankind from the Days of *Abraham* to this Time, has been only doubling in 360 Years, which is the longest Time that ever has been set by the latest Observations, which perhaps may be the most accurate. Upon this Supposition, which would be the most favourable to our Critic, the Number of  
Inhabitants

Inhabitants on the Earth now, would be more than in *Abraham's* time, nearly as 1000 to 1. But to come low enough, let us suppose the Increase from that Time to have been only as 200 to 1; and then three hundred Men at that Time would be as much in Proportion, or an equal Force, with sixty thousand with us at present; and such a Number well-disciplined, or very desperate resolute Men, we should reckon a very powerful Army. Had our *Hebrew* Critic considered this, he would not have made so slight of three hundred and eighteen Men which *Abraham* could raise and arm in his own Patriarchy or Principality. But could *Abraham* or *Isaac* at this time have more Descendants, or a greater Family-Issue than all the eleven Sons of *Canaan*? No; and yet he might be a more powerful Prince, and have more Servants and Subjects under his Command, than all of them put together, tho' he had had no Heir or Issue of his own. Can this Critic imagine, that the three Bands which came with *Jacob* out of *Padan-aram*, were all of his own begetting, or that he had no Subjects and Servants, but his natural Issue? When *Abraham* could raise and arm three hundred and eighteen Men in his own Patriarchy or Principality, the Number of Souls in all could not be less than two thousand; which was no inconsiderable Body of People at that Time, within four hundred Years of the Deluge. But our verbal Critic  
seems

seems to imagine, that the Earth might be as populous, and their Armies as numerous then as now. Yet *Abraham*, we see, with these three hundred and eighteen Men, could repel the united Force of four Kings, two of them the Kings of *Persia* and *Chaldea*, and pursue them through the Country as far as *Damascus*. It is true, he came upon them by Night, and took them at Advantage. But surely it could not be a great Force or numerous Army, as would be thought at this Time, that three hundred and eighteen Men could thus surprize and drive clear out of the Country. And the Fame of this Patriarch is celebrated by all the Eastern Writers, quoted by *Dr Hyde*, as one of the richest and most powerful Princes of the East in those Days.

When *Isaac* had sojourned many Days, or Years, at *Gerar* in *Philistia*, and they had at last discovered his Artifice, and the Cheat he had put upon them about his Wife, they did not yet dare attack or drive him out by Force of Arms, but the King thought fit only to give him good Words, deal kindly with him, and only desire or intreat him to go away; for, saith he, *Thou art much mightier than we*. And when there had been Rencounters and Skirmishes afterward, between the Servants or Subjects of those Princes, *Abimelech* thought it the safest Way to go and make it up with the Patriarch, while it was well; and therefore he went with the chief Captain of his Host,  
in



in an humble manner, to sue for Peace, beg Favour, and enter into a League of Friendship with this *Hebrew* Prince, which was ~~related~~, *Gen.* xxvi. 26——31. Such Facts and natural Consequences of Things sufficiently speak themselves, and need no Art of Criticism to explain them; nor can any Darkness or Ambiguity of Oracles obscure them.

But the Advocate, *p.* 120. assures us, upon the Credit of his Oracle, that *Jacob* went down into *Egypt* with only seventy Souls; and that these seventy Souls in two hundred and ten Years were increased to six hundred thousand. Besides *Children*, besides *Women and Children* he might have said; for it was only the Males from twenty to sixty that were numbered: And when they were numbered again in the Wilderness, about forty Years after, where Males from twenty to sixty, are expressly mentioned, the Number comes out much the same, only a little over. And it is plain all along, that their Numberings were of the Males only, between those Ages from twenty to sixty.

As for the seventy Souls mentioned *Gen.* xlv. as going down into *Egypt* with *Jacob* the Patriarch, or Head of the Principality, every one must see, that they are only the Princes or Heirs apparent of the several Tribes, exclusive of their Servants or Subjects, their Shepherds, Herdsmen, Dairy-Maids, menial Ser-

vants, Officers, &c. which are not mentioned or included in the Royal List. But to imagine, that these seventy, the Heads and Princes of the Patriarchy, went into *Egypt* with their numerous Flocks and Herds, and whole Principality all alone, and without any Servants or Subjects under them; and that they had there a large rich Province assigned them for separate Abode and Settlement of seventy Persons only, is a Supposition that cannot be made but upon the Credit of an Oracle as explained and interpreted by such a Critic. What was the three Bands or Companies which *Jacob* brought out of *Padan-aram*, and which he had there got together in twenty Years, now vanished, or had he made no Increase or Improvement of his Principality from that Time to this, when God had blessed him so abundantly?

Among 600000 Men, from twenty to sixty, the Number of Souls in all or the whole Body of the People, must have been nearly 4000000. But that seventy Souls in two hundred and ten Years, should increase to near any such Number, is as credible, as that *David* left a thousand thousand Talents of Silver, and a hundred thousand Talents of Gold towards the Temple, which must have been sufficient to have built the whole Temple in solid Gold and Silver: Or as probable as that *Jehosaphat*, in his Time, within the small Country of *Ju-*  
*dea*,

*dea*, had an Army on Foot of 1160000, all ready for War in the Field, besides Garrisons in all the strong Holds and fenced Cities, as the Historian assures us, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 12—19.

I had happened, by Mistake or Oversight, some way or other, to put the Number two hundred and ninety for two hundred and fifteen. The Time the Patriarchs sojourned in *Canaan*, for two hundred and ninety was the Time from the Birth of *Abraham* to the going down into *Egypt*. But here the Advocate, Critic and Pedant like, sets himself gravely and laboriously to confute me, and is so overjoy'd on the Occasion, to have caught me at such a Hop, that he could hardly contain himself. *Risum teneatis amici*. This Critic, I dare say, would never own any Mistake, Slip, or Oversight in himself; and he seems to be almost as infallible as his *Hebrew* Oracles. But it is no Wonder, if my natural Reasonings should not be so clear, unexceptionable, and free from Error as his Divine Authorities. Demonstration itself, and all moral Truth with such Critics, must give Way to the personal local Appearances and Voice of God.

§. 10. The Advocate, in his sixth Section, would seem to come to the main Point. *But were there in Reality, any Promises of God made to these Patriarchs at all? Is not the whole Account related of them, mere Illusion and*

*Dream?* Our Philosopher is of this Opinion; and thinks it well, that it may be excused as a *Dream*. Why, this was indeed the Philosopher's Opinion; and I was in some Hopes, when I dipt into this Section, an Attempt at least to confute that Opinion, and to prove the divine Authority of the Historian against all Appearances of rational Probability to the contrary: But herein I found myself miserably mistaken; for instead of proving, or attempting to prove, the only Thing in Question, he assumes the Authority of the Historian as a Proof of itself. But, surely, I am not obliged to take this as a *Postulatum*; and he must have known very well, that I should not grant it. And what then can such a Trifler mean? Will he argue against an Adversary, upon a Principle not granted, without proving of it, or so much as attempting the Proof? But as I can find nothing in this Section that can be thought by any Man of Sense and Impartiality in the least, to the Purpose, I shall venture to pass it over till I am call'd upon to shew Cause for so doing; and then I hope to give good Reasons, if the Reason I have already given should not be thought sufficient.

The seventh Section turns upon *Abraham's* offering up his Son; and here I shall attend him the closer, because it is a Matter of some Consequence: And as the Advocate has employ'd



ploy'd about six Sheets upon this Argument, no doubt but he thought it a Matter of Consequence. I wish he had contracted his Argument into less Room, for I am sure it is more Labour to read it, than to answer it: But such Declaimers always plague one with Prolixity, as if they could no more write a Book than preach a Sermon, without wasting *Time*, and saving *Matter*.

I thought it, in short, inconsistent with the Nature and Perfections of God, to make it *Abraham's* Duty, and to bring him to a *Resolution*, by an express Command to do a Thing, which in Nature and Reason ought not to be done, and which God never intended to be done. If human Sacrifices are contrary to the Nature and Perfections of God, God is here supposed to have enjoin'd them, and to oblige *Abraham* to the moral Act, tho' he was prevented from the outward overt Act, and with what the Morality of the Action did not consist.

But this Difficulty the Advocate has endeavoured, or rather sweated and struggled through 95 Pages, to remove. He spends the first nine Pages, to prove, that *Abraham's* could not be a groundless enthusiastic Faith or Perswasion, because it was contrary to his rational moral Character; and no Reason can be given how he should come  
by

by any such Opinion, unless God himself had impress'd him with it. But who can account for Enthusiasm or Hypochondriacism? In the same Way of Reasoning, I might prove, that Mr *Chandler* did not write this Section without Inspiration or Revelation, because it is not consistent with his rational or moral Character, and therefore nothing but a Divine Impulse could have moved him to it. He could surely never have talk'd such Nonsense, if God had not put it into his Head.

*But the End for which this extraordinary Sacrifice is appointed, is declared to be for the Temptation or Trial of Abraham, i. e. to try whether he would do such a wicked unreasonable Thing or no, and recommend himself to God by it. But possibly, the Angel of the Lord, whom God Jehovah employ'd to convey his Will to this holy Patriarch, did not certainly know whether he could stand such a Trial. It may be not; and then he found, that Abraham had less Sense and Religion than he could have imagined. But the true and immediate use of this Temptation or Trial was for the Benefit of Abraham himself, that he might have an Opportunity of approving himself to God, by an exemplary Instance of Faith and Obedience, and might thereby secure a signal Testimony from God himself in his Favour,*  
and

*and obtain a Reward worthy his Piety and Virtue, &c. p. 155.* But the Question still is, whether this was a Trial of *Abraham's Faith and Virtue*, or of his *Superstition and Enthusiasm*? and whether this tempting Angel was a good or a bad Angel?

But *Abraham* could not be deceived in this Case; for he as well knew the Voice and Appearances of God, as a Friend knows the Voice and Countenance of his Friend; and could never be deceived in the Judgment he formed of them, p. 158. This is roundly pronounced with a true priestly Air, and nothing is wanting but the *Proof*. But that is a mere Trifle with such *sound Believers*, which they are never to trouble their Heads about.

From this 158th to the 168th Page is a mere Ramble, which I can make no Top nor Tail of, and therefore shall not pretend to answer it. But p. 168, the Advocate sets all this Matter right. God neither commanded, nor *Abraham* ever intended, to offer a human Sacrifice to God, in the Sense and Manner in which human Sacrifices were offered up to their Idols by the Heathen Nations, &c. But how does he prove that the Heathen Nations, at this Time, offered human Sacrifices, or that this was not the first Instance of it, or Overture towards it? How does it appear, that even the wicked  
immoral

immoral *Sodomites*, at this Time, were Idolaters, or worshipped false Gods, or especially that they offered human Sacrifices? He can prove nothing of this, nor is there any such Thing said, or intimated, of human Sacrifices either proposed or resolved upon before *Abraham's* Time.

That *Abraham* might not design to destroy his Son irretrievably, and to cut off all the Promises in him, may be probable enough. He imagined, that if he burnt his Son to Ashes God would raise him again, and make good his Promises after all. But the Question still is, how he came by this Faith or Perswasion, whether from God or the Devil, or from a good or an evil Angel? 'tis certain that God never designed any such Thing, and could not want to try *Abraham* in such a Case. And no good Angel, or righteous Being, would have tempted him to a Thing so wicked and immoral in itself, to try his Obedience, and recommend him to the Favour of God.

From this p. 168 to 194, I meet with nothing worth Notice, as he goes on upon the same Supposition of a Divine Authority for a most unnatural and immoral Action. But it seems, as *Abraham* firmly believed, that if he should sacrifice his Son God would certainly bring him into Life again



again out of his Ashes; this being the Case, it was not an Intention of Murder in *Abraham*, nor would it have been an Act of Murder had he actually taken away his Life for a short Time, in Obedience to God's Command. But *Abraham* certainly must have intended to put his Son to all the Pains and Tortures of Death, and to make him suffer as much as any Man could in dying by such Violence. And this he could not have done till he had divested himself of all Humanity and Compassion, and it is not credible, nor conceivable, that God, against Nature, should put any Man to such a Trial as this. Besides, I would ask, how came *Abraham* by this Perswasion, that, in Case he would sacrifice his Son, God would bring him into Life again from his Ashes? the Devil, or an evil Angel, might tempt him to this upon such a Presumption, as he tempted Christ to destroy himself upon the same Supposition. But, surely, God himself could never be the Author of such a Faith, or make *Abraham* believe a Falshood, that he would do what he never intended to do. God is said to have commanded *Abraham* to sacrifice his Son, and thereby made it his Duty, and fixed his Intention and Resolution to commit the Fact, without the least Hint or Intimation of restoring him to Life again, which  
I would

would have destroyed all the pretended Merit of the Action, and been no Trial at all. And since such Faith could not come from God as the Author or Cause of it, who would not make *Abraham* believe a Lye, and what was never intended; it must have been either from a Temptation of the Devil, or the Strength of Imagination and Enthusiasm. But suppose any Enthusiast now should be so tempted to offer a human Sacrifice, upon a strong Perswasion that it would be highly acceptable to God, or that God would raise the Person to Life again, would such a Perswasion alter the Nature of the Thing, or make it otherwise than wicked, execrable, and unnatural? But 'tis very plain to me, that neither these Patriarchs, or their Historians and People after, ever understood or acted upon the grand fundamental Principle of Morality, *i. e.* the eternal immutable Reason and Fitness of Things. They governed and conducted themselves generally by Dreams, Visions, Apparitions, Voices from Heaven, and such supernatural Phænomena, the plain and evident Marks of Superstition and Enthusiasm. Upon Authority thus grounded, there is nothing so immoral which they do not justify. Dissimulation, Fraud, Intriguing, Cheating, Oppression, Violence, and the most outrageous Devastations, Wars,  
bluow and

and Bloodshed, are all approved and justified by Divine Authority, and placed to the Account of God himself as commanding, ordering, and directing. The *Hebrew* Story is full of such Instances, and nothing, one would think, but the deepest Prejudice and Prepossession could hinder Men from seeing it. The true Light of Nature, the eternal immutable Reason and Fitness of Things, seems to have been eclipsed, and, in a Manner, extinguished, in those former dark Ages of Ignorance and Superstition. And I may venture to say, that this true Principle and Ground of Morality was more lost, or less regarded, among the *Jews*, than any of the Heathen Nations.

What follows thro' this tedious sickening Section, for about sixty Pages together, is nothing but one continued Ramble of Impertinence, Shuffling, and Evasion, in which he forges Circumstances, and puts Suppositions at Will and Pleasure, without the least Ground or Authority from the Text. But I have reduced this Argument, as above, to a very narrow Compass; and when he, or any other Man, has fairly answered that, I may consider the Matter again. But I have, at present, something more to do with Time, than to spend it idly in a Wild-goose Chace.

His eighth and last Section is perfectly supernumerary, in which he does not so much as attempt to prove any Thing. He tries, indeed, to run the Rig upon what I had said of the *Hebrew* Phraseology, and the wild uncooth Manner and Diction of those Historians. But he had better, if he had been able, have proved his main Supposition, and first Principle of all, the Divine Authority, or unerring Guidance of those Authors. But this was a *Noli me tangere*. It is too tender a Point to be meddled with by an Advocate for *Revelation*. But what can be more shameless in a Man pretending to Controversy, than to argue all along upon a Principle or Supposition not granted, and which cannot be proved? If this History stands upon the same Foot with all other ancient Story; if we are as much at Liberty to examine it critically and discretionally, and to judge of it by the common Rules and Principles of rational Probability, so as to separate the probable from the improbable, and to take the one and reject the other, which is a Right we claim and take with all other Historians, or Writers of every Kind; if this, I say, be the Case, there can be no Harm done. But if it is not so; if we have not the same discretionary

Right



Right of Judgment here, as in other Cases of the same Nature; if we are obliged to take every Thing as granted, or as certainly true and divine from these Writers, whether it should appear true or false, probable or improbable, to human Reason; if this, I say, be the Case, that we must judge here by Authority and not Reason, let it be proved; let this Divine Authority, and unerring Guidance, be cleared up, and something will be done to the Purpose. But till this is done, such Advocates for Superstition, Enthusiasm, and implicit Faith, which they call Revelation and Christianity, may write and preach their Hearts out, before they can convince any Body.

This learned Critic, and Advocate for Revelation and Christianity as he would be thought, at the End of this Section and Book, draws up a List of the several Articles of his Charges which, he presumes, he has fixed upon me, and made good against me, and he brings them up to just Thirty-one. 'Tis well he made them up just one and thirty; for had they been one more he must have been out, and one less might have lost the Game.

But I must now submit, with him, to the Judgment of the Reader, whether my poor Defence may be of any avail or not. I have considered so much of his Argument

ment as I thought worth taking Notice of. And as for his splenetic Complements, and priestly Civilities, I can easily forgive him, as he has bestowed them all at his own Cost, and given no Body any Trouble but himself. And now to conclude; If any Thing, let fall in these Sheets, should seem too harsh and severe, I hope no Man will much blame me who considers the Occasion given for it. I was forced to say something in my own Defence, against one of the most splenetic and ill-natured Attacks that, perhaps, ever appeared in Controversy.

Union-Court, Broad-Street,

May 25, 1741.

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The True Gospel of Jesus Christ asserted. Wherein is shewn what is, and what is not that Gospel; what was the great and good End it was intended to serve; how it is excellently suited to answer that purpose; and how, or by what Means, that End has in a great Measure been frustrated. Humbly offered to publick Consideration, and in particular to all those who esteem themselves, or are esteemed by others, to be Ministers of Jesus Christ, and Preachers of his Gospel; and more especially to all those who have obtained the Reputation of being the great Defenders of Christianity. Acts xvii. 6. *They drew Jason, and certain Brethren, unto the Rulers of the City, crying, These that have turned the World upside down, are come hither also.*

To which is added, A short dissertation on Providence. The second Edition.

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*These two last Books by Mr CHUBB.*



